



MINNESOTA BOARD OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

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PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT Fact Sheet

History

Physician Assistants were initially registered in Minnesota in 1987 and governed by rules promulgated by the Minnesota Department of Health. Effective 1991, a new law allowed physicians to delegate prescribing authority (excluding controlled substances) to physician assistants who were currently certified by National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. In 1995, a law was enacted to replace the rules and thereby enabling the physician assistants to become statutorily legitimate. This law allowed physicians to extend their delegation of authority to controlled substances. The law also shifted more responsibility to the physicians and the physician assistants by eliminating the supervisory agreement protocol and instituting a system whereby a practice setting description is filed with the Board annually along with the evidence of annual review of physician-physician assistant agreement.

A law became effective on August 1, 2009 changing

- Registration to licensure
- Eliminating temporary registration. Temporary licenses are still available to applicants who have passed the NCCPA exam
- Increasing # PAs supervised from 2 to 5
- Practice Setting Description to Notice of Intent to Practice and
- Supervisory Agreement/Delegation/Internal Protocol to Delegation Agreement

Physician Assistant Advisory Council

The Physician Assistant Advisory Council is appointed to advise the Board of Medical Practice on issues regarding physician assistant licensure standards, enforcement of statutes, and complaint review. The Council is composed of three physician assistants, two physicians and two public members.

Title Protection

Nonlicensed individuals are prohibited from using the title "*Physician Assistant*," "*Licensed Physician Assistant*," "*Minnesota Licensed Physician Assistant*" or "*PA*," "*Orthopedic Physician Assistant-Certified*" or "*O.P.A.-C.*" Physician assistants who elect to place their license on inactive status do not pay renewal fees and shall not practice as a physician assistant. Practicing as a physician assistant with a lapsed license or license on inactive status is grounds for disciplinary action. The Board enforces the requirements of the physician assistant licensure system and provides information to consumers and other interested persons.

Permanent License

The law provides the following requirements for licensure: 1) current certification from National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants; and 2) is not under current discipline as a physician assistant unless Board considers the condition for licensure.

Temporary License

A temporary license is available to applicants who meet all the requirements for permanent licensure and wish to practice before final approval is granted by the Board.

Notice of Intent to Practice

A Notice of Intent to Practice must be submitted to the Board prior to beginning practice as a PA. Individuals who practice without submitting a Notice shall be subject to disciplinary action unless care is provided during a disaster or emergency. A new Notice must be submitted to the Board when there is a change in primary supervising physician or place of employment. A Notice is required for each place of employment. A revised and updated Notice must be submitted when significant changes (e.g. change in delegated prescribing authority) are made by the physician-PA team. Evidence of review of the Notice of Intent to Practice and Delegation Agreement must be provided to the Board on the renewal form to ensure current practice is reflected.

Physician-Physician Assistant Delegation Agreement

This delegation agreement may or may not have prescribing privileges. To establish eligibility to prescribe, a physician assistant must be: 1) currently licensed with the Board; 2) currently certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants; and 3) have a physician-physician assistant delegation agreement with prescribing privileges delegated by the supervising physician in the delegation agreement. The delegation agreement is documentation that a Minnesota licensed physician accepts full medical responsibility for the performance, practice, and activities of a physician assistant in accordance with the role delineation set forth in the delegation agreement. The delegation must be appropriate to the physician assistant's practice, within the physician assistant's training and experience, and services customary to the supervising physician's practice. The delegation agreement must be kept on file at the practice site and reviewed at least annually at PA license renewal time. The supervising physician cannot supervise more than five full-time equivalent physician assistants simultaneously. With the approval of the Board or in a disaster/emergency situation pursuant to Minn. Stat. §147A.23, a supervising physician may supervise more than five full-time equivalent physician assistants simultaneously. Physician assistants may provide services in a practice site geographically remote from the supervising physician. Failure to maintain annually reviewed and updated agreements, internal protocols or prescribing delegation is grounds for disciplinary action.

Continuing Education

Each licensed physician assistant must obtain 50 contact hours of Category 1 continuing education every two years or take the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants exam during the last two years as a condition of licensure renewal. Newly licensed physician assistants commence their two year cycle on July 1 immediately following the date licensure was granted.

Renewal Cycle

Licenses must be renewed annually on or before July 1 of each year. Evidence of annual review (e.g. a statement that the review has been completed) of the Notice of Intent to Practice and the Delegation Agreement must accompany the renewal. Renewal notices are sent approximately six weeks prior to expiration. It is the physician assistant's responsibility to keep the Board advised of their current address. The Board is obligated to mail the renewal application to the address on file. Failure to receive the renewal documents does not relieve physician assistants of their renewal obligation. Licenses which have lapsed for two annual renewal cycles are canceled for nonrenewal.

If any part of this Fact Sheet conflicts with the rules or laws, the rules or laws take precedence. It is your responsibility to keep up with legislation. Ignorance of laws and regulations is not a defense. Call the Board offices if you have any questions.